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1997/07/29

THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

July 29, 1997

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I wish to advise you of my intention to designate within the Department of State a Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues. This individual, who will be named in the very near future, will coordinate U.S. Government activities and programs which affect Tibet and ensure that they receive appropriate attention.

A central objective of this position will be to promote substantive dialogue between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama or his representatives. The Special Coordinator will also vigorously promote the U.S. policy of seeking to protect the unique religious, cultural and linguistic heritage of Tibet, and pressing for improved respect for human rights.

We anticipate that the Coordinator will maintain close contact with religious and cultural leaders of the Tibetan people, including travel to Tibet. Since the United States regards Tibet as part of China, however, these contacts will not constitute any form of diplomatic recognition of a Tibetan government-in-exile or promote the independence or secession of Tibet from China.

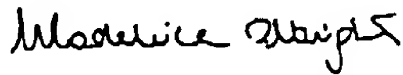
In view of this decision, we believe it is unnecessary for the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for fiscal years 1998 and 1999 to include a provision mandating the appointment of a Special Envoy for Tibet.

The Honorable
Jesse Helms, Chairman,
Committee on Foreign Relations,
United States Senate.

-2-

I hope that this step will advance our common interest in obtaining greater respect for the human rights of the people of Tibet. I look forward to working constructively with you and your committee toward this goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Madeleine Albright". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Madeleine" written in a larger, more prominent hand than the last name "Albright".

Madeleine K. Albright